

Northampton, April 10th 1839

Dear Friend,

Of the lady who brings this (Mr. Hayward) I know nothing, except that she comes from Concord, is connected with Mr. Hoar's family, is on a visit to Northampton, has sought my acquaintance because she hungers and thirsts to meet true blue Garrison abolitionists, and wishes to see you for the same reason.

Your urgent letter did not reach me till Tuesday noon; when it would have been impossible to have reached Boston in season for the meeting, even if all other things had been favorable. I wanted to be with you, to do what I could; yet I doubt whether I could have been half so serviceable as you imagine. You who are on the field of action cannot realize how little those at a distance can learn of the true state of things from mere newspaper information. We can see somewhat more clearly than those who have never been in the field of action; but you would perchance find us awkward, from sheer ignorance, at the very moment when much depended on our knowledge and discretion. As for the abolitionists in general, in this region, they have a very false idea of what all this

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quarrelling is about. They have a vague notion that it is a squabble between the-
bsterians and Quakers; and of course side
with the former. I do ~~not~~ wish that this
public contention should be brought to an
end as soon as may be, without compromise
of principle. It is doing immense injury
to the cause. The worst of it is, that there
are a vast many recriminating words in
the newspapers, which do not "leave much
light" on the controversy, except to those
whose eyes are already associated. Cannot
somebody explain in a few brief clear
words that the Massachusetts Board are
not contending with thebsterianism, method-
ism, or any other ism; that they are not
seeking to sustain Garrison, or Perfection-
ism, or any other ism; that they withhold
the Liberator because it represents a
principle of freedom. That Garrison has
conscientious scruples against voting, be-
cause all politics seem to him founded
on violence, and intrigue; that he wishes
to express his opinion freely, but does not
require others to agree with him, under
the penalty of being considered recreant
abolitionists; while those who oppose the
Liberator do interfere with freedom of
conscience, by setting up political action

as a test of true abolition, and requiring all members of the Society to conform to their standard. That the open discussion of the Peace question is important to Anti-Slavery; because emergencies may arise when it will be highly desirable for every man to have an enlightened conscience and a settled mind with regard to his own duty, &c. &c.

I am not surprised at Mr. Birney. Since my first visit to N. York, no exemplification of the narrowing influence of Presbyterianism can surprise me. I do not wonder at Angelina Grimké; for she was educated a Presbyterian, and has married a Presbyterian. I know its influence right well, and I love it as my eyes love smoke.

Was there ever anything more calculated to widen the breach, than that Report of the Quarterly meeting in the Commonwealth. Gaffney's announcement that he conceals certain things too bad to be reported is about as provoking a piece of courtesy as I have happened to meet with. How laudable remarks are reported too. Our best speakers are made to talk apparently without object or coherence, as if they picked up sentences out of a printer's broken pie. I do not believe separation can be avoided.

I fear I shall not be able to do much for the Cradle of Liberty. We are trying, but meet with almost no encouragement. The two leading abolitionists here, Williston and Stoddard, became responsible for 100 copies of the abolitionist; and they have been very diligent in getting subscribers. It is a sad pity the Cradle did not get the first start. About all who wish for a cheap paper have already subscribed for the Abolitionist; and wherever I go, I find the impression has been circulated that the Cradle is got up in opposition.

Mr. Child delivered a lecture at Williamsburg last Sunday Eve. When he had done, Rev. Mr. Lusk asked him to speak in favor of the Abolitionist with a view of getting subscribers; but he "up and spoke" in favor of the Cradle of Liberty, and passed a eulogium upon Garrison. I don't think he will be asked to lecture there again.

What little abolition there is here is nearly all clerical. Owen Roy and Starkweather takes the N. York Observer. Mr. Williston had a long discussion with my husband the other day about existing difficulties; and when Mr. W. showed that Phelps convicted himself of secret management, Mr. W. confessed he had not read much about it. He stood to it that Garrison was too much deified - that he

owed nothing to Garrison — that Joshua Leavitt made him an abolitionist — that Leavitt made nearly all the abolitionists in Connecticut Valley. This put me in mind of Whitefield's drunken convert, who stammered out, "Why, don't you know me? I, I, I am one of your converts." "I should think so", replied W. — "It's plain enough you are none of Jesus Christ's making". I can trust you with this comparison; for you will not misunderstand it for blasphemy. From some quarters I should expect to hear that I had called Garrison Jesus Christ.

Is Mr. Parker deaf? Do you know I had formerly put constraint upon myself, because I did not like to say how much I thought advertisements circumstances had lifted her above her natural level.

Your fear about "Stater's straps" are very natural, but quite unfounded. My husband is remarkable for mastering difficulties, and doing whatever he tries. His soul has been almost worried out of him by want of funds, and by delay after delay occasioned by cheap machinery; but he has made perfect sugar; and finds his skill in no way deficient to the task he has undertaken. I long to come to Boston; for in most things that interest me this is a

Ms. A. 5.1 p. 58

dry and thirsty land.

Best love to your respective families;
and to your husband in particular.

Yrs affectionately.

L. M. Child

